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19 December 1961

MEMORANDUM FOR: AD/NE

SUBJECT: Portuguese Reaction To Goa Crisis

1. Portuguese reaction to the role of the US in the Goa crisis has varied according to the pressures of the moment. Thus, before the invasion had actually begun, Foreign Minister Nogueira warned Secretary Rusk that the loss of Goa might drive Portugal to reconsider its basic foreign policies. However, when the US issued its denunciation of India's aggression, Ambassador Pereira expressed warm appreciation for the US statement. At all times during the crisis there has also been background rumbling from the Portuguese controlled press and from various government officials suggesting that past US policy toward Portuguese colonial problems had so weakened the Empire that Nehru was encouraged to attack.

2. These are not unexpected reactions from a nation confronted with what it regards as a great tragedy, anxious for support from its allies, cognizant that any support would not be military, and apprehensive lest the loss of Goa be only a

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forerunner of even worse disasters. The Portuguese, stunned by the rapidity of the Indian takeover, are just now contemplating their humiliation. We believe that, although there may be a few spasms of emotional lashing out against scapegoats such as the UN, NATO, or the US, as the shock wears off, the Portuguese will come to view the whole episode more with sorrow and cynicism than with outrage.

3. Salazar, himself, will probably conclude that the situation might have been salvaged if his allies had made more energetic approaches to New Delhi, but that this could hardly have been anticipated given the general US record on colonial issues, and the specific US position on Angola. He probably regards Western support for Portugal in the UN Security Council debate as fulfilling only the minimum obligations of allied friendship, but as a realist probably appreciates he could expect no more. Moreover, he almost certainly recognizes that any new crisis arising over the Portuguese African territories would present the US with even more difficult policy choices.

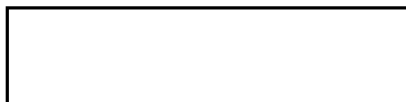
4. Consequently we believe that Portugal will not go off the deep end in the immediate future over such issues as its NATO

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membership or the US base facilities in the Azores. Much will depend on the public positions taken by the US over the next few months toward India. At the same time we believe that the Portuguese will be inclined to abandon their appeals to the US for "understanding as an ally of their unique colonial problems," and instead attempt unabashedly to use what leverage they feel they have -- e.g., the base agreements -- as a means of extracting advance concessions from the US on colonial matters of vital interest to Portugal.



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